Mahabharatha and a re-look into Vimsottari dasha periods

Venerable masters of yore gave us wealth of knowledge and insights into astrological calculations and analysis of horoscopes of individuals. The sequence of events that may occur in the life of an individual are interpretable based on the dasha periods he/she is running or will pass through subsequently and of course more importantly, the placement of Grahas, who are Lords of the Maha dasha, antardasha and vidasha periods, in the natal chart. There is no need to re-emphasise the absolute necessity of correct birth time so that subsequent computations of dasha periods and their durations would be accurate.

The most prevalent dasha system in Indian astrology is Vimsottari dasha system. As the name indicates the Vimsottari dasha encompassing all the nine planets (Ravi, Chandra, Kuja, Rahu, Guru, Sani, Budha, Ketu and Sukra) is 120 years. Even though it is redundant, let us recall the durations of each planet's dasha period: Ravi: 6 years; Chandra: 10 years; Kuja: 7 years; Rahu: 18 years; Guru: 16 years; Sani: 19 years; Budha: 17 years; Ketu: 7 years; Sukra: 20 years; making a total of 120 years.

It may be worth recalling that the starting dasha at the time of birth is decided by the Lordship of Nakshatra in which Chandra is posited. If Chandra is posited, for example in Krithika, it is Ravi dasha as Ravi is Lord of Krithika Nakshatra. Thus Chandra is given prominence in Indian astrology and computation of time. In our previous book "Jataka Navaneetam"[1] we put forward a new concept, treating Chandra as the time keeper, on rectification of birth time. Thus by taking Chandra as our chronometer and based on logic of advent of dasha periods, we were able to mathematically show how birth time can be rectified. A natural corollary that flowed from this concept has been computing the starting dates of dasha periods. We showed from pure mathematical point that dasha periods would not start on any random day but only on specified days dictated by the dasha, antardasha or vidasha period. This has come as a consequence of quantisation of birth time, which was explained in the book. There we have shown that the year as would be taken in astrology is not same as the Gregorian year of either 365 or 366 (once in four years for leap year) days. In that book we explained the rationale behind this. There a month is assumed to be 30 Nakshatra days and a year is assumed to have 360 Nakshatra days. A complete table of dasha periods upto vidasha period is given in that book.

As the dasha periods are helpful to an astrologer to either predict the timing of events in the life of an individual or interpret occurrence of an event, a clear understanding of the dasha period is desirable. Also its starting and ending dates are known with reasonable accuracy and confidence. For this it is necessary to know the concept of calculation of time in the past and how that can be related to the present day concept, which is Gregorian. In our opinion, along with rectification of birth time, computing the dasha periods to reasonable accuracy is equally important.

One passage in Virata Parvam of Maha Bharatam induced us to think as to how the year was calculated in that period. Towards the end of "Agnata vasam" (one year period of incognito), suspecting that Pandavas are in Matsya desham, the Kingdom of Virata, the Kauravas along with their army, decided to start hostilities in the dominions of Matsya Kingdom. Kauravas assumed if Pandavas are indeed in Matsya kingdom, they would come to the rescue of King Virata and get discovered before the end of incognito period of one year and their disguise is blown out compelling them to go on exile again for 12 more years as per the conditions initially agreed upon. Accordingly the Kauravas invade and seize about 60,000 cattle

belonging to King Virata. Arjuna, the great warrior Pandava prince confronts them. The Kaurava prince Durtodhana raises this question if indeed one year of incognito period is over. Raj-Guru Drona beseeches Bhishma to clarify this issue. Bhishma said,

> "*The wheel of time revolves with its divisions, viz., with Kalas and Kasthas and Muhurtas and days and fortnights and months and constellations and planets and seasons and years. In consequence of their fractional excesses and the deviations of also of the heavenly bodies, there is an increase of two months in every five years. It seems to me that calculating this wise, there would be an excess of five months and twelve nights in thirteen years. Everything, therefore, that the sons of Pandu had promised, hath been exactly fulfilled by them. Knowing this to be certain, Vibhatsu (Arjuna) hath made his appearance.*"

From the above it is clear that Lunar year, in which each month corresponds to 30 tithis (Sukla Padyami to Amavasya), is taken as reference for reaching a decision as to whether Pandavas completed the last one year in incognito. Continuing this argument, it can be assumed that the Vimsottari dasha system refers to 120 Lunar years and not the Gregorian years as is normally taken for granted. A Lunar month is the time required for Chandra to complete 30-tithi cycle. This is same as 30 Nakshatra days we assumed in our book. Translating this time to the familiar Gregorian calendar, one Lunar month is covered in about 29.53059 or 29.5 Gregorian days. A Lunar year thus consists of about 354 Gregorian days and not 365 or 366 days as in Gregorian year and this is 6 days less than that we assumed in our book "Jataka Navaneetam. For accurate dasha period calculations, this difference is significant. This is because, for Sukra dasha period which is 20 years, the difference comes to about 120 days (4 months!). This is a significant difference.

Extending this argument further, the entire Vimsottari dasha period of 120 years actually refers to 120 Lunar years and the duration of each Graha's dasha period actually refers to number of Lunar years. What it means in terms of Gregorian system is given in the form of table below:

Graha	Dasha duration	
	Lunar years (1 Lunar year = 354 days)	Gregorian Years (1 Gregorian year = 365.2 days)
Ravi	6	5.816
Chandra	10	9.693
Kuja	7	6.785
Rahu	18	17.448
Guru	16	15.509
Sani	19	18.417
Budha	17	16.479
Ketu	7	6.785
Sukra	20	19.387
Total	120	116.319

Thus it is seen that 120 Lunar years of Vimsottari dasha period is equal to a little more than 116 Gregorian years. This is almost 4 years less and is quite a significant difference. The staunch traditional school may have reservations about radically changing the 120 year period to about 116 year period. I want to emphasise the fact that there is no change in the concept of

Vimosttari dasha syatem. It is still 120 years but the reference point is changed to Lunar year, which I believe is the correct approach. This change perhaps brings the astrologer close to accurately interpreting the timing of events.

It should be mentioned that we are not proposing any new concept with respect to Vimsottari dasha system. Only the reference point is shifted, rightly, from Gregorian to Lunar. If we take 29.53059 days instead of 29.5 days for a month, there would be slight deviation in the calculations. As a first approximation, this can be neglected. Even though we have taken a Gregorian year equals 365.2 days to compensate for leap year every four years, the starting dates of the Maha dasha periods can be corrected to adjust to the day on which the Nakshatra as decided by that dasha period is prevailing. Adjusting the starting date of a maha dasha to the Nakshatra day as shown in the table is not as significant as the change in the Maha dasha period itself to Gregorian year cycle, particularly for Maha dasha periods of long duration (Gu, Bu, Rh, Sa and Su) from Lunar year cycle. At a minimum, the Ravi-Ravi antaradasha period of 3 months 18 days in Lunar year cycle becomes 3 months 14 days in Gregorian calendar. On the other extreme, the Sukra-Sukra antardasha period of 3 years 4 months in Lunar year cycle becomes 3 years 2 months 23 days. Compare this with adjusting the starting day of a Maha dasha by a maximum 14 days to bring it to the specified Nakshatra day as decided by the Maha dasha Lord.

Why should anyone take this as the gospel truth? In our book Jataka Navaneetam, we mentioned that starting date of any dasha period in one's life would not be any day but starts on a day when the Nakshatra of the day is owned by the Dasha Lord. As mentioned earlier, if the birth occurs on a Krithika Nakshatra day, the birth Maha dasha is that of Ravi. At the end of Ravi maha dasha, when Chandra maha dasha starts, it will be on a day when Rohini Nakshatra owned by Chandra is prevalent. If our concept of Vimsottari dasha system based on Lunar year as reference and converted to Gregorian system as explained above is correct, then Chandra maha dasha should begin on the day mentioned above. At the most there would be a few days difference as we assumed a lunar day is equal to 29.5 days and not as 29.53059 days. And also we don't consider one extra day for leap year.

As an example, the sequence of Nakshatra days of the dasha periods starting from Ketu Nakshatra (Aswini, Makha or Moola) is given below. Detailed table up to Vidasha period is given in the book Jataka navaneetam.

Table for Nakshatra on the starting day of dasha period starting from Ketu birth dasha

Birth Lord and Nakshatra →	*Ketu*	Aswini	Makha	Moola
Nakshatra Lord of the day for Subsequent Maha dashas	*Sukra*	Pubba	Purvashada	Bharani
	Ravi	Krithika	Uttara	Uttarashada
	Chandra	Rohini	Hasta	Sravanam
	Kuja	Chitta	Dhanista	Mrigasira
	Rahu	Satabhisham	Ardra	Swathi
	Guru	Purvabhadra	Punarvasu	Visakha
	Sani	Pushyami	Anuradha	Uttarabhadra
	Budha	Jeysta	Revathi	Aslesha

Table for Nakshatra day of Antardasha periods

(**Sequence: Ke, Su, Ra, Ch, Ku, Rh, Gu, Sa, Bu**)

	Ketu				**Kuja**		
Ke-Ke	Aswini	Makha	Moola	**Ku-Ku**	Chitta	Dhanista	Mrigasira
Ke-Su	Hasta	Sravanam	Rohini	**Ku-Rh**	Uttarabhadra	Pushyami	Anuradha
Ke-Ra	Aswini	Makha	Moola	**Ku-Gu**	Uttarabhadra	Pushyami	Anuradha
Ke-Ch	Moola	Aswini	Makha	**Ku-Sa**	Pubba	Purvashada	Bharani
Ke-Ku	Hasta	Sravanam	Rohini	**Ku-Bu**	Mrigasira	Chitta	Dhanista
Ke-Rh	Purvabhadra	Punarvasu	Visakha	**Ku-Ke**	Pubba	Purvashada	Bharani
Ke-Gu	Purvabhadra	Punarvasu	Visakha	**Ku-Su**	Dhanista	Mrigasira	Chitta
Ke-Sa	Makha	Moola	Aswini	**Ku-Ra**	Pubba	Purvashada	Bharani
Ke-Bu	Rohini	Hasta	Sravanam	**Ku-Ch**	Bharani	Pubba	Purvashada
	Sukra				**Rahu**		
Su-Su	Pubba	Purvashada	Bharani	**Rh-Rh**	Satabhisham	Ardra	Swathi
Su-Ra	Dhanista	Mrigasira	Chitta	**Rh-Gu**	Satabhisham	Ardra	Swathi
Su-Ch	Mrigasira	Chitta	Dhanista	**Rh-Sa**	Satabhisham	Ardra	Swathi
Su-Ku	Pubba	Purvashada	Bharani	**Rh-Bu**	Satabhisham	Ardra	Swathi
Su-Rh	Uttarabhadra	Pushyami	Anuradha	**Rh-Ke**	Satabhisham	Ardra	Swathi
Su-Gu	Uttarabhadra	Pushyami	Anuradha	**Rh-Su**	Satabhisham	Ardra	Swathi
Su-Sa	Chitta	Dhanista	Mrigasira	**Rh-Ra**	Satabhisham	Ardra	Swathi
Su-Bu	Purvashada	Bharani	Pubba	**Rh-Ch**	Satabhisham	Ardra	Swathi
Su-Ke	Chitta	Dhanista	Mrigasira	**Rh-Ku**	Satabhisham	Ardra	Swathi
	Ravi				**Guru**		
Ra-Ra	Krithika	Uttara	Uttarashada	**Gu-Gu**	Purvabhadra	Punarvasu	Visakha
Ra-Ch	Krithika	Uttara	Uttarashada	**Gu-Sa**	Makha	Moola	Aswini
Ra-Ku	Uttarashada	Krithika	Uttara	**Gu-Bu**	Rohini	Hasta	Sravanam
Ra-Rh	Uttara	Uttarashada	Krithika	**Gu-Ke**	Makha	Moola	Aswini
Ra-Gu	Uttara	Uttarashada	Krithika	**Gu-Su**	Sravanam	Rohini	Hasta
Ra-Sa	Krithika	Uttara	Uttarashada	**Gu-Ra**	Makha	Moola	Aswini
Ra-Bu	Uttarashada	Krithika	Uttara	**Gu-Ch**	Aswini	Makha	Moola
Ra-Ke	Krithika	Uttara	Uttarashada	**Gu-Ku**	Sravanam	Rohini	Hasta
Ra-Su	Uttarashada	Krithika	Uttara	**Gu-Rh**	Punarvasu	Visakha	Purvabhadra
	Chandra				**Sani**		
Ch-Ch	Rohini	Hasta	Sravanam	**Sa-Sa**	Pushyami	Anuradha	Uttarabhadra
Ch-Ku	Punarvasu	Visakha	Purvabhadra	**Sa-Bu**	Pubba	Purvashada	Bharani
Ch-Rh	Aswini	Makha	Moola	**Sa-Ke**	Pushyami	Anuradha	Uttarabhadra
Ch-Gu	Aswini	Makha	Moola	**Sa-Su**	Bharani	Pubba	Purvashada
Ch-Sa	Sravanam	Rohini	Hasta	**Sa-Ra**	Pushyami	Anuradha	Uttarabhadra
Ch-Bu	Purvabhadra	Punarvasu	Visakha	**Sa-Ch**	Uttarabhadra	Pushyami	Anuradha
Ch-Ke	Sravanam	Rohini	Hasta	**Sa-Ku**	Bharani	Pubba	Purvashada
Ch-Su	Viskha	Purvabhadra	Punarvasu	**Sa-Rh**	Dhanista	Mrigasira	Chitta
Ch-Ra	Sravanam	Rohini	Hasta	**Sa-Gu**	Dhanista	Mrigasira	Chitta
	Budha				**Budha**		
Bu-Bu	Jeysta	Revathi	Aslesha	**Bu-Ku**	Revathi	Aslesha	Jeysta
Bu-Ke	Uttarashada	Krithika	Uttara	**Bu-Rh**	Ardra	Swathi	Satabhisham
Bu-Su	Revathi	Aslesha	Jeysta	**Bu-Gu**	Ardra	Swathi	Satabhisham
Bu-Ra	Uttarashada	Krithika	Uttara	**Bu-Sa**	Uttara	Uttarashada	Krithika
Bu-Ch	Krithika	Uttara	Uttarashada				

If the birth Maha dasha is that of Ketu and the Nakshatra is Aswini, then subsequent Maha dasha periods start on the Nakshatra days shown in third column (Sukra Maha dasha starts on a Pubba day and so on). If the birth star is Makha, then Sukra maha dasha starts on a Purvashada day. If it is Moola then Sukra maha dasha begins on a Bharani day. Subsequent dashas follow the order shown in the respective columns.

Let us find out, by taking an example to see how the dasha periods change.

Date of birth: 25-8-1952

Time of birth: 12:45:0 IST

Place of birth: Cuddapah, India

Birth time is rectified to 12:39:9 IST

Birth Maha dasha Kuja (7 Lunar years or 6.785 Gregorian years) Chandra: Thula 00^0-37'

Chitta 3 Padam

Dasha	Conventional Cycle of 120 years (as practised currently)			Lunar cycle of 120 years converted to Gregorian cycle of 116.319 years	
	Duration (Y)	Starting date		Duration (Y)	Starting date
Birth dasha Kuja	3Y-2M-3D (Remaining)	25-8-1952		3Y-0M-19D (Remaining)	25-8-1952
Rahu	18 Y	28-10-1955		17.448 Y	14-9-1955
Guru	16 Y	28-10-1973		15.509 Y	25-2-1973
Sani	19 Y	28-10-1989		18.417 Y	29-8-1988
Budha	17 Y	28-10-2008		16.479 Y	29-1-2007
Ketu	7 Y	28-10-2025		6.785 Y	21-7-2023
Sukra	20 Y	28-10-2032		19.387 Y	4-5-2030
Ravi	6 Y	28-10-2052		5.816 Y	23-9-2049
Chandra	10 Y	28-10-2058		9.693 Y	17-7-2055

Thus, it is seen that by the time the native completed Sani Maha dasha, there is a slippage of 1 year 2 months. Next Budha Maha dasha sees the slippage increased to 1 year 9 months. At least it makes difference in computing Vidashas. To that extent timing of predicting events in one's life could become reasonably possible.

It is not my intention to analyses the events occurred in the life of the native. I urge all the discerning readers to compare the two dasha periods with respect to horoscopes they may have and arrive at own conclusions. I will be very happy to hear comments.

Reference

1. *Jataka Navaneetam*, Karanam L. Ramakumar and Vemuri V. Ramakrishna,

http://www.scribd.com/doc/4641183/Jataka-Navaneetam